



Stormwater Rain Gardens

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A rain garden is a small-scale bioretention area that treats stormwater runoff. They are designed as depressional areas that are planted with perennial flowers and grasses, as well as small trees and shrubs installed in pervious soils to allow absorption and filtration of pollutants from stormwater runoff. An ideal location for rain gardens on residential properties is where there is an existing wet low-lying area that can be converted into this type of landscape feature. Here are a few facts about rain gardens:

- The cost associated with installing a residential rain garden is about four dollars per square foot.
- Rain gardens can effectively remove up to 90% of nutrients and chemicals from stormwater runoff.
- A typical rain garden is four to eight inches deep.
- Rain gardens attract beneficial birds, butterflies and other pollinators.
- Most rain gardens are planted with native deep-rooting plants.
- You can direct your downspouts and sump pump discharge into rain gardens.
- Rain gardens must be periodically weeded.

You can install a rain garden yourself or hire a professional to create a functional and unique landscape feature in your yard. As an IDEM designated Indiana Clean Community, Merrillville has Low Impact Development Standards that require green best management practices (BMPs) like rain gardens for new development. Here are additional resources for more information on rain gardens:

- EPA Soak Up the Rain: Rain Gardens
<https://www.epa.gov/soakuptherain/soak-rain-rain-gardens>
- NIRPC Rain Garden Resources
<https://www.nirpc.org/2040-plan/environment/water-resources/water-can-home/rain-gardens/>
- Indiana - Clear Choices Clean Water
<http://indiana.clearchoicescleanwater.org/plants/rain-gardens>

